Agreement regarding supply of fighter jets from Russia

1174. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD:
SHRI C. M. IBRAHIM:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether an agreement for supply of the Russian 140-SU-30 Mkt fighter jets and transfer of related technology was reached between India and Russia during the recent visit of Russian President to New Delhi;

(b) if so, the details and terms of the agreement; and

(c) the action taken and being taken on both sides in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The salient features of the Agreement are:—

(i) Licence is transferred to HAL for manufacture of 140 SU-30 MK-I aircraft, their engines and airborne equipment and also additional 920 engines and 140 sets of airborne equipment for catering to maintenance during the expected total life of the aircraft.

(ii) Russian side shall supply all necessary technical documentation relating to various technologies, identified technical equipment including special machines, jigs and fixtures and tooling as well SKD/CKD kits and components;

(iii) Russian side shall provide necessary technical assistance by deputing Russian specialists and also by training Indian specialists in Russia.

(c) The General Contract regarding various terms and conditions for Russian supplies has been concluded on 28th December, 2000. Necessary sanction enabling HAL to commence activities related to the contract has been issued.

Test flight of LCA

1175. DR. KARAN SINGH:
SHRI C. M. IBRAHIM:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the long awaited indigenously built prototype of the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) has been test flown;

(b) if so, whether the test flight was flawless;

(c) the cost of completion of the first prototype of the LCA; and what are the salient features of the Indian LCA; and

(d) whether the LCA was to have participated in the flypast on the inaugural day of the air show in Bangalore on February 7, 2001, but was withdrawn at the last minute due to a technical snag, if so, the nature of the snag and how it was removed?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir. The maiden flight of first LCA Technology Demonstrator (TD-1) took place in Bangalore on January 4, 2001.

(b) Yes, Sir. The test flight was successful and met all the test parameters set for the flight.

(c) The expenditure incurred in the LCA programme upto December 31, 2000 was Rs. 1818.53 crore. LCA is an advanced technology, single seat, single engine, light weight, all weather, multi role air superiority fighter aircraft.

(d) Yes, Sir. During pre-flight built-in test an error signal was noticed. However, on analysis it was found that the error signal related to a non-safety critical "snag'. Consequently, the aircraft was cleared for the flight and flew in the Air Show on Ninth February, 2001.

Commercial Production of MBT Arjun

†1176. SHRI D. P. YADAV: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are going to start production of major war tank named 'Arjun' on commercial basis, if so, by when; and

(b) whether even the Defence sector is being opened for Indian companies, if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) OFB has already embarked on the production of MBT Arjun tanks for the Indian Army and the first batch of complete tanks is schedule for issue during the year 2003-2004.

(b) As per the existing industrial policy, manufacture of arms, ammunition and allied items of defence equipment, defence aircraft and warships is reserved for the public sector. At present non-lethal stores required by the Armed Forces

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.